

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A centerfilled chewing gum composition comprising a shell portion and a centerfill portion, said centerfill portion comprising ~~an effective amount of a~~ at least one calcium-containing compound suspended in the centerfill portion and being relatively uniformly dispersed therein without settling, and being present in an effective amount, sufficient to provide at least the minimum daily nutritional amount of calcium to a user by chewing a reasonable number of pieces of the chewing gum composition per day.

Claim 2 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein the centerfill further comprises a suspending agent.

Claim 3 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 2 wherein the suspending agent is selected from the group consisting of alginate, pectin, gelatin, starch, modified starch, and carboxymethylcellulose.

Claim 4 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 2 wherein the suspending agent has a molecular weight such that a 1% to 2% aqueous solution of the suspending agent imparts a viscosity of from about 500 to 10,000 cps to the centerfill portion.

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Claim 5 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 4 wherein the viscosity is from about 2,000 to 6,000 cps.

Claim 6 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 5 wherein the viscosity is from about 2,500 to 5,500 cps.

Claim 7 (original) The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein the calcium-containing compound has an average particle size of less than about 17 microns.

Claim 8 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 7 wherein the calcium-containing compound has an average particle size of from about 0.4 to 17 microns.

Claim 9 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 8 wherein the calcium-containing composition has an average particle size of from about 2 to 8 microns.

Claim 10 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 7 wherein the calcium-containing compound is calcium carbonate having an average particle size of from about 3 to 5 microns.

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Claim 11 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein from 45 to 55% of the calcium-containing compound is particle size of from about 0.6-1.0 microns and the remaining 55 to 45% has a particle size of about 14-17 microns.

Claim 12 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 11 wherein the calcium-compound is calcium carbonate, and wherein 50% of the calcium carbonate has a particle size of about 0.8 micron and 50% has a particle size of about 15 microns.

Claim 13 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein the calcium-containing compound is non-water soluble or sparingly water soluble.

Claim 14 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 the calcium-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of calcium carbonate, calcium citrate, calcium lactate, calcium gluconate, calcium maleate, calcium phosphate and mixtures thereof.

Claim 15 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein the centerfill portion further comprises at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of vitamins, minerals, mineral salts and botanicals.

Claim 16 (original): The chewing gum composition of claim 1 wherein the amount of the calcium-containing compound is sufficient to release an effective

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amount of calcium into the oral cavity by chewing 3 to 5 pieces of the chewing gum composition per day.

Claim 17 (canceled without prejudice).

Claim 18 (original): A method of delivering an effective amount of calcium to the oral cavity of a human being comprising chewing 3 to 5 pieces of the chewing gum composition of claim 1.

Claim 19 (new): A centerfilled chewing gum composition comprising a shell portion and a centerfill portion, said centerfill portion comprising a suspending agent and at least one calcium-containing compound having an average particle size of less than about 17 microns, suspended in the centerfill portion and being relatively uniformly dispersed therein without settling, and being present in an effective amount, sufficient to provide at least the minimum daily nutritional amount of calcium to a user by chewing a reasonable number of pieces of the chewing gum composition per day.

Claim 20 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the suspending agent is selected from the group consisting of alginate, pectin, gelatin, starch, modified starch, and carboxymethylcellulose.

Claim 21 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the suspending agent has a molecular weight such that a 1% to 2% aqueous solution of

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the suspending agent imparts a viscosity of from about 500 to 10,000 cps to the centerfill portion.

Claim 22 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 21 wherein the viscosity is from about 2,000 to 6,000 cps.

Claim 23 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 22 wherein the viscosity is from about 2,500 to 5,500 cps.

Claim 24 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the calcium-containing compound has an average particle size of from about 0.4 to 17 microns.

Claim 25 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 24 wherein the calcium-containing composition has an average particle size of from about 2 to 8 microns.

Claim 26 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 25 wherein the calcium-containing compound is calcium carbonate having an average particle size of from about 3 to 5 microns.

Claim 27 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein from 45 to 55% of the calcium-containing compound is particle size of from about 0.6-1.0 microns and the remaining 55 to 45% has a particle size of about 14-17 microns.

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Claim 28 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 27 wherein the calcium-compound is calcium carbonate, and wherein 50% of the calcium carbonate has a particle size of about 0.8 micron and 50% has a particle size of about 15 microns.

Claim 29 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the calcium-containing compound is non-water soluble or sparingly water soluble.

Claim 30 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 the calcium-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of calcium carbonate, calcium citrate, calcium lactate, calcium gluconate, calcium maleate, calcium phosphate and mixtures thereof.

Claim 31 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the centerfill portion further comprises at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of vitamins, minerals, mineral salts and botanicals.

Claim 32 (new): The chewing gum composition of claim 19 wherein the amount of the calcium-containing compound is sufficient to release an effective amount of calcium into the oral cavity by chewing 3 to 5 pieces of the chewing gum composition per day.

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Claim 33 (new): A method of delivering an effective amount of calcium to the oral cavity of a human being comprising chewing 3 to 5 pieces of the chewing gum composition of claim 19.